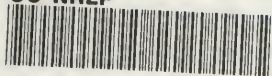


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DE MOWBRAY,

A

Legend of Penwortham:

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

JAMES FLOCKHART.



" For from thee breathes the odour of a name
Whose sweetness melts my soul and dims my eyes ;
And in thy mystic leaves of woe and shame
I read a tale to which my heart replies
In voiceless throbbing and devoted sighs ;
Death's darkest agony and mercy's claim,
And love's last words of grief are written in thy dyes."
SONNETT TO THE PASSION FLOWER.



LONDON:

THOMAS BOSWORTH, 215, REGENT STREET.

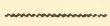
1854.

LOAN STACK

LONDON :

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INTRODUCTION.

I LOVE the nooks and corners of Old England ! I have been a wanderer upon the earth, and my life has been strangely chequered ; still my heart warms when I behold the bright and sunny spots of my native land. The village church with its ivied tower, the ruined abbey and baronial hall, the woodland glen and forest glade, have each a peculiar beauty, which is only to be found in English scenery. Under the influence of this feeling I have often rambled out of my way to

visit an old church, or survey the mouldering remains of some ancient minster.

During these excursive visits I have been in the habit of dotting down my observations and thoughts on the passing scene, occasionally peopling it with beings of my own creating.

It was on one of these occasions, when I visited Lancashire, that the following pages were written.

While I resided in Preston I was much struck with the beauty of its environs. It mattered little whither I bent my steps, I perceived in every direction that Nature had bestowed her gifts with a lavish hand. The botanist, geologist, antiquary, and general lover of the picturesque were alike indebted to her bounty.

During my desultory rambles on the banks of the Ribble, I have often gazed with delight on the various picturesque points of view in the sur-

rounding scenery as I watched the river wind its serpentine way through the broad and peaceful valley. When the mind becomes predisposed to admire the beautiful, it requires but little stretch of the imagination to clothe the objects before us with romantic incidents, and give to

————— “ Airy nothingness

A local habitation and a name.”

The following legend is of this description, being a mere creation of the fancy—in short, a poet’s dream. One of my greatest delights was to watch during the sunset of a summer’s evening the picturesque old Church of Penwortham casting its lengthening shadows upon the calm still waters. It was only needful to find an old castle or baronial dwelling, a priory or abbey, and some other necessary adjuncts to weave a tale of interest or mystery; and it was not long before my wants were satisfied.

I found, after a little research, that a castle formerly stood to the north of the church, on what is now called the "castle hill." I am told that some remains of it, such as fragments of broken arches and walls, existed sixty years ago; be that as it may, not a vestige is at present left, but, like the owners, it has floated down the stream of time, and left

"No wreck behind."

It is unknown whether it was built by the Britons, Romans, or Saxons: one thing, however, is certain, Edward the Confessor possessed the Barony and Castle of Penwortham, so that its high antiquity is unquestionable. William the Conqueror afterwards bestowed it on one of his favourites, Roger de Busli, who probably resided there.

Soon after the Conquest some monks from Evesham, in Worcestershire, founded a Priory

here, which they dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and it existed until the dissolution of the religious houses.*

There is another object on which, as it forms a prominent point in my narrative, I must offer a few remarks.

On the road which leads from Penwortham Bridge to the Church, at some distance before reaching the avenue leading to the entrance, there is a narrow pathway by which the traveller, after

* The following notes in the Cotton MSS. refer to this priory :—

“ Vitellus XVII. Memorandum.—That the Convent of Penwortham shall have the Priory every year against the feast of St. Egwin, sixty salmons, &c. That Sir Ralph de Wylcote, late Prior of Penwortham, assigned to the Convent, for provision, sixty shillings per annum out of his increment, and Sir William de Chirton Abbot affirmed the assignation A.D. 1320. The same prior ordered for each of the monks an entire salmon.”

descending a few rude steps, may reach the fields on the left hand. At the bottom of the steps, a little to the right, is a spring of clear water flowing into a sort of natural basin, surrounded by brushwood, near which I have seen primroses and other wild flowers blooming in the greatest luxuriance. This well, like others in the olden time, had its patron saint. It was one of those acts of piety practised by our forefathers to acknowledge the inestimable value of water by dedicating all springs to some saint, but more particularly to the Virgin Mother of our Saviour, as being emblematical of purity. The well at Penwortham, in accordance with this custom, is said to have been dedicated to "Our Blessed Lady," and to have been formerly remarkable for working extraordinary cures; and it is even believed by some to possess this power at the present day; in fact, I have heard many people in the neigh-

bourhood say, that to wash the hands in its water is a certain antidote to evil.

The ancient Priory, like the Castle, has passed away, and its site occupied by the private residence of an honourable and respectable English family. Its priors and monks are sleeping in the dust, and the solemn sound of matin song and vesper hymn no more reminds the earthly pilgrim that he daily approaches nearer to the realms of everlasting peace and rest.

“*Sic transit gloria mundi.*”

I must here acknowledge my obligation to Mr. Baines’s “History of Lancashire,” among other sources, for the information I have gained respecting the antiquities of Penwortham and the neighbourhood.

It now only remains for me to request the indulgence of my gentle readers, begging them to remember that the following trifle has been

written during those hours which are usually devoted to recreation, but which, with me, are unfortunately like "angel's visits, few and far between," and that it was composed more for the sake of amusement than with a view to publication.

CANTO I.

DE MOWBRAY.

A

Legend of Penwortham.

“ Quel Rosignuol che s'è soave piagne
Forse suoi figli, o sua cara consorte,
Di dolcezza empie il cielo e le campagne
Con tante note s'è pietose e scorte,
E tutta notte par che m'accompagne
E mi rammente la mia dura sorte.”

PETRARCH.

I.

'Tis summer—and the golden ray
Of sunset at the close of day,
So clear and bright, yet so serene,
Imparts its beauty to the scene ;

Shedding around a farewell smile,
So glorious yet so calm the while.
The trees beneath the brilliant ray
Their green and golden hues display ;
While birds from every leafy bower,
Inspired by the sunlit hour,
Send forth their evening song of praise
In unpremeditated lays ;
Till gentle evening, on her way,
Steals on as ends the parting day.
There's nought on earth but owns the power
Of twilight's soft and silent hour ;
That stilly hour of sweet repose
Which heavenly contemplation chose
To raise the soul with thoughts of love
From earthly things to heaven above ;
There's not beneath the sky a flower
But feels the influence of its power ;
And as the darkness o'er it throws
Her mystic shroud—its leaflets close

As if within itself it drew
Some silent grief—with tears of dew
It droops its head upon its breast,
And gently weeps itself to rest.

II.

It was in such a lovely hour*
De Mowbray sat in thoughtful mood,
Gazing from his lonely tower
To were Penwortham's Priory stood.

* The following description may be acceptable to those readers who are unacquainted with the localities mentioned in the Poem :—

The village of Penwortham is beautifully situated on the banks of the Ribble immediately opposite to Preston. The Church, which is an ancient and exceedingly interesting structure, stands within the domain of the Priory which is now the site of a modern gothic building, although it yet contains some slight remains of its original monastic character, such as the chapel, refectory, &c.

The entrance is by a lodge through a finely wooded avenue leading directly to the Church. On the left, soon after you enter,

Beside him was his lovely wife,
A gentle being free from guile,
Who could have smoothed his rugged life,
And charmed him with her sunny smile,
But that some dark and inward grief
That felt no hope, sought no relief,

is an ancient square stone with an aperture in which was formerly fixed a cross. A little further on the same side stands the Priory, which has now passed into the hands of the Rawstone family, but, I believe, they have not resided there since the death of the late Colonel Rawstone.

At the end of the avenue stands the ancient Church of St. Mary, and immediately beyond the churchyard wall, on the north, the castle hill.

The whole is situated on a very picturesque barrow-shaped hill, broken, as it were, into three tumuli, and the whole well wooded to the water's edge. From the summit there is a magnificent prospect, bounded on the west by the estuary of the Ribble, and on the north and east by the Longridge and Yorkshire falls. St. Mary's Well, I have already described as being on the left of the road leading from the river to the lodge gate.

Appeared to haunt him day by day,
And gnaw his very soul away.
Yet still he gazed with tearful eye,
Which showed the lone heart's misery,
To where the sacred building rose ;
For, ere to-morrow's noon shall close,
A pilgrim there must he repair,
To pass an hour in holy prayer ;
For he was bound by vow to go
Before St. Mary's shrine to do
A penance on a certain day,
To wash some former sin away.
But what the crime ? To him alone
Was its mysterious nature known.

III.

Though years of sorrow pass away,
Fond memories of our youth remain ;
And then it seems but yesterday,
So bright those dreams come back again.

So thought De Mowbray as he sate,
His torn heart lone and desolate :
He would have given worlds to feel
As he once felt—before the steel,
That conscience planted in his breast,
Had made the wound that knew no rest.
He had braved war's tumultuous storm ;
Met death in every shape and form ;
Beneath the cross had raised his brand
Against the haughty Moslem's band ;
But through that dark and wild career
He neither knew nor felt a fear ;
Yet quailed he now beneath the smart
That rankled in his stricken heart.

IV.

Years passed away—and then he sought
His much loved early home again ;
With firm resolve he vainly thought
To break the links of misery's chain.

He sought the joys and glittering show
Which kingly courts alone bestow ;
And strove to crush within his breast
The gloomy thoughts that on him prest.
'Twas in a bright and lucky hour
He met fair Edith—felt her power ;
He saw within her bright blue eyes
Affection's flame, which never dies.
She was a thing to see and love,
And, gentle as a trembling dove ;
A being formed of smiles and fears,
Whose silent thoughts broke forth in tears ;
For none but thoughts of heaven could there
Be found in one so pure and fair.
He wooed her—she became his bride,
His best beloved, his joy, his pride !
And then sweet thoughts would fill his breast
Which gently charmed him into rest :
He felt that Heaven sent her to bring
His heart back from its wandering ;

For when his passion's deadly strife
Oft seemed to wear away his life,
She turned to Heaven in prayer and wept,
And watched beside him as he slept ;
Like Guardian Angel from above,
Whose mission was of peace and love !

v.

'Twas thus, within their castle tower,
In evening's still and lonely hour,
Fair Edith watched as she stood by
De Mowbray in his agony.
She saw the fearful gloom that came
In fits, and shook his trembling frame ;
She waited till his bursting grief
Had found in tears some slight relief,
Then raised her silver voice—the while
From her sweet lips breathed forth a smile ;
In accents sweet the silence broke,
“ De Mowbray ! ”—’twas all she spoke.

Oh ! there are times when looks and words
Will strike upon affection's chords,
And wake within the lonely breast
Long dormant feelings from their rest.

He raised his throbbing head and felt

As if he saw an angel there,

He gazed on her—and then he knelt

As if he breathed to God a prayer !

VI.

But, hark ! Penwortham's Priory bell *

The Angelus is ringing,

And sweetly o'er each hill and dell,

Its holy music flinging !

* It was anciently the custom in England, as it is in Catholic countries at the present time, for the church bell to ring thrice in the day ; viz., morning, noon, and evening ; when all who were within hearing knelt, and repeated the angelic salutation, together with some appropriate prayer, in which they were reminded that they had approached nearer to their earthly end. It derives

While o'er yon sacred pile there gleams
The rising moon, whose trembling beams
On clustered shafts their glories pour,
That they with crocket, spire, and tower,
And fretted arch and corbel gray,
In bold relief their forms display ;
While from within sweet voices raise
To God their evening hymn of praise,
Whose sounds float through the silent air,
Lifting the soul on upward wing
To Heaven with thoughts of peace and prayer,
As thus the holy fathers sing:—

its name from the words which are used in the Latin Testament, where it is related that the angel appeared to Mary to announce the coming of our Lord, "*Angelus Domini ad Mariam dixit. Ave gratia plena,*" &c.

THE HYMN.

Dear Mother of our Saviour blest !

Before thy shrine we bend the knee ;

Oh, grant us in our hour of rest,

The prayers we humbly beg from thee ;

Ave Maris Stella.

Star of Mercy !—hear our prayer,

Look down on us as did thy child,

When laid in Bethlehem's stable there,

He looked and on the Magi smiled ;

Ave Maris Stella.

Star of the Heavens !—beaming bright

Over the blue and trackless sea,

Grant the prayer that in the night,

The watchful mariner asks from thee ;

Ave Maris Stella.

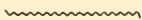
Star of the Helpless !—guard the weak ;

Soothe the sick and sufferer's pain ;

Oh ! dry the tear from sorrow's cheek,
And guide the wanderer home again ;
Ave Maris Stella.

Star of Love !—look down from high,
And take the weeping widow's part ; -
Oh ! listen to the infant's cry,
And comfort the afflicted heart ;
Ave Maris Stella.

Star of Hope !—amid the storm
That rages o'er the sea of life ;
We hail with joy thy lovely form
Smiling through the warring strife ;
Ave Maris Stella.



'Then ceased that pure and holy strain,
Nor met the listening ear again,
'Twas wafted to the Ribble's side,
And o'er its waters sweetly swept,
It in the far off distance died,
And all around in silence slept.

VII.

De Mowbray rose—his fevered brain

Felt some relief from woe again,

And while he wept, he softly pressed

His own dear Edith to his breast.

'Tis said that spirits hover near

To catch our tear-drops as they fall,

But the repentant sinner's tear,

Is what they prize the most of all.

And while his frame yet trembling shook,

His hand fair Edith gently took,

And led him forth that he might rest

And calm the sorrows of his breast ;

She seemed to be an angel guide,

Attendant ever at his side,

With care her nightly watch to keep,

And guard him in his hour of sleep !

CANTO II.

CANTO II.

ὥς χάρις μὲν ἦν θάνῳ
λύπη δ', εἰς ζῶ. ποῦ βίου δ' οὐδεὶς πόθος.
ποῦ ποτε κεραυνοὶ Διὸς, ἡ
 που φαεθῶν
"Ἄλιος, εἰ ταῦτ' ἐφορῶντες
κρύπτουσιν ἔκηλοι ;
ἔ, ἔ· αἶ, αἶ.

ELECTRA SOPHOCLES.

I.

AWAKENED by the swift-winged Hours,
The sun hath left his eastern bed ;
And o'er the beautiful summer flowers
His golden light hath brightly shed.
The dew drops hang on every spray
And glitter in his brilliant ray ;

While, wafted on the zephyr's wings
The bright-eyed Morning forth he brings,
All blushes like a youthful bride,
And smiling in her beauty's pride.
And there are perfumes sweet and rare
Floating in the clear fresh air ;
While birds in every copse and dell
Hath each his tale of love to tell.
O Nature ! 'tis a glorious time
To see thee in the morning's prime,
When all around appears to raise
A joyous hymn of love and praise,
Which bursts from forest, field, and sky
In one full tide of melody !
There is on every hand a voice
Which bids the silent heart rejoice ;
 It floats upon the passing breeze,
 And murmurs in the rippling stream ;
 'Tis heard amid the rustling trees
 When waving in the sunny beam.

And then it speaks in accents sweet
Of some bright land where all may meet ;
Where joy and peace for ever reign
To live, and part no more again.

II.

There is a road which winds beside
The banks of Ribble's silver tide ;
Whose path is lined with goodly rows
Of hawthorn and the wild hedge-rose ;
Amidst whose branches thickly twine
The bramble, briar, and eglantine ;
Which scatter, from their varied bloom,
Upon the air a rich perfume.
Its course pursues a gentle sweep
Around Penwortham's hilly steep,
Whose side by stately woods is lined
Of various goodly trees combined ;
The silvery ash and oak is seen,
Together with the linden green,

Waving their graceful foilage there,
And glittering in the sunny air.
Pursue this path, 'twill lead you straight,
Towards the ancient Priory gate.

III.

Midway up there is a dell
With tangled weeds and copse o'ergrown ;
Beneath whose shade our Ladye's well,
O'er pebbly bed and mossy stone,
Pours forth a pure and crystal spring,
With soft and gentle murmuring ;
In numerous bubbles breaking bright,
Each sparkling with a diamond's light,
And gently leaps its tiny spray
Adown the hill-side on its way ;
Through fields, amid whose emerald green
Clustering are the wild flowers seen ;
Where crowsfoot hath the daisy met,
With primrose and the violet.

Within this cool and lowly grot
Spirits from Heaven are said to dwell ;
So calm and sacred is the spot
Beside St. Mary's holy well.

For maidens oft at eve repair,
Believing that a power is there
Which them from every harm can save
If but their hands its waters lave.

IV.

But who is she that wildly stands
In this sweet spot with frenzied air,
Who madly waves aloft her hands.
The very image of despair?
Her foreign garb and mien combine
To show her of some southern clime ;
Whose sun gives forth more brilliant rays,
And skies are more intensely blue ;
Whose starlit nights and cloudless days
Impart to all a fairer hue.

v.

Like sunbeam from the clouds on high,
Shines forth the light of her black eye,
As tenderly beneath the lash
It steals—then, like the lightning's flash,
It bursts upon the gazer's sight,
A glorious flood of love and light !
The sunny tinge that brightly plays
Upon her glowing cheek portrays
The workings of a fiery soul
That knows no fear, owns no control !
The lips proud curl—the sneering scorn,
Tells how her heart is racked and torn
By angry thoughts, which wildly grew
To passions of the darkest hue.
Like some lone ruin, scathed and bare,
Adorned with many a sculpture fair,
Till, in a luckless hour, there came
The spoiler with the brand and flame ;

Then swiftly by the scorching blast
O'er that fair pile in fury passed,
Till ceased the fire that round it played
And showed the ruin it had made ;
Thus lone and desolate, behold
Her like the Pythoness of old.

VI.

Poor Inez thou hast travelled far*
With love thy only beacon star,

* To show how women, actuated by strong passions, can undertake long and hazardous journeys, I need only allude to the example shown by the mother of St. Thomas of Canterbury, better known as the celebrated Thomas à Becket. (Gilbert à Becket, a citizen of London, went to the crusades, and was taken prisoner by the Saracens. He escaped through the assistance of a young Syrian girl, who had fallen violently in love with him, and returned home. So strong was her affection that she undertook the journey to England, which was then extremely hazardous, alone and on foot, knowing only two words

Thy hope, thy all, whose cheering ray
Hath led thee on thy lonely way.

Is there a heart that will not own

What woman's love hath power to do,
'Though cast upon the world alone

She still loves on with heart as true,
As when she lived in happier hours,
By Fortune nursed in peaceful bowers ;
Before she felt a grief, or care,
The heart's deep canker-worm despair ?

VII.

De Mowbray little recks the sight,
That like the simoom's withering blight,
Will cross him soon when passing by
Towards St. Mary's priory.

of English, " Gilbert " and " London." She subsequently found him, and they were married. The offspring of this marriage was the celebrated Chancellor of England and Archbishop of Canterbury.

And now with measured step and slow

He wends along his onward way,

A settled gloom is on his brow

Which nought can ever clear away.

Just where the road bends he hath passed,

Then reaches he the well at last ;

When, lo ! before his startled sight,

Like some dark phantom of the night,

Across his pathway Inez stands,

With head erect and upraised hands,

While bursts on him from her dark eye

A look of speechless agony.

Go see the lightning's vivid flash

And listen to the thunder's crash ;

Then mark well how the gnarlèd oak

Is shivered by the mighty stroke ;

See this, and it will show thee well

De Mowbray fixed as with a spell,

Without the power to turn and flee,

So pale and motionless stood he.

It seemed as if some demon came,
Who with the mystic Gorgon's glare
Had gazed upon his trembling frame,
And changed him to a statue there.

VIII.

Then he at last the silence broke,
And thus in trembling accents spoke :—
“ Art thou a spirit from the dead,
Sent here my fairest hopes to blight,
Or her whom meeting most I dread
That now appals my dizzy sight?
If thou art still an earthly thing,
By the guardian of this spring,
I charge thee in her presence say,
Why now thou stoppest me on my way?
For with repentant heart I go
To kneel before St. Mary's shrine,
And ease my weary load of woe,
By praying for my sins and thine.”

IX.

“ It is no spirit that you see

Now standing here before your view,

But her who once was told by thee

That thou with heart both warm and true,

Would love her with such holy love

As only angels from above

Can know ; whose sweet affection's light

Burns on for ever pure and bright.

Thus flattered by thy evil smile,

She fell a victim to thy plot

And like a flower that bloomed awhile

Then withered and was heeded not.

Yes, 'tis Inez that you see,

A ruin wrought by hell and thee,

A wretch on life's rough ocean tost,

Her peace and fame for ever lost,

With feelings crushed, and joys destroyed,

And maddened by the mind's dark void,

That chills the heart in its distress

Amid the wide world's loneliness.

Yes, I have wandered far away

From that fair land which gave me birth,

Beneath whose sun a brighter ray

Smiles forth upon the gladdened earth ;

Yet never found I rest from pain ;

I slept—but 'twas to wake again,

To know and feel the bitter smart

That rankles in a blighted heart,

When vows once deemed as truly spoken

With sweet affections chords are broken :

Degraded with a sullied name,

Bowed down with sorrow, sin, and shame :

Then left deserted and alone

With broken heart the world to roam.

Without a hope, a thought, or care,

The hapless victim of despair,

A being shunned by all to be,

The poor and ruined thing you see.

“ Here before the face of Heaven
As thou dost hope to be forgiven,
By thy oath I ask thee now
Fulfilment of thy promised vow,
But if thy heart refuse to be
Aroused to justice—then on thee
My bitterest curse shall surely fall
Beyond the vain hope of recall.”

X.

She ceased—there played a bitter smile
Upon her lips of scorn and pride,
As if she pitied, yet the while
The worst that could befall defied.
De Mowbray quailed beneath the look
That glanced from that dark fiery eye,
And like some wretched culprit shook
With conscience-stricken agony.
There is a power beyond control,
That dwells within the guilty breast ;

Which like a demon gnaws the soul
Unceasingly and without rest.
It is when memory wakes at last,
Recalling faults and crimes long past ;
And this, alas ! *too* well he knew,
And to his heart's cost felt it too.

XI.

With quivering lip and pallid cheek,
His faltering tongue essayed to speak :
“ Oh ! taunt me not—like scorpion stings,
Thy words have wrung my bursting breast ;
While back to mind remembrance brings
Thy wrongs that still are unredressed.
“ Oft in the lonely hour of night,
When sleep hath left my aching eyes,
Spirit like before my sight,
Thy well known form appears to rise.
“ Thus bound by misery's galling chain,
I've felt the worm that knows no rest,

While phantoms of a fevered brain
Have made a hell within my breast.

“ Yes. Inez, 'tis decreed by Fate,
That we again must never meet;
No power to close, hath love or hate,
The gulf that yawns beneath our feet.

“ And now from hence I will depart
To kneel before our Lady's shrine,
There humbly ask with contrite heart,
Forgiveness of my sins and thine.

“ But when on yonder green hill's side,
Thou seest the setting sunbeams play,
Thou'lt know that I at eventide,
Shall be upon my homeward way.

“ Then here beside this holy well,
We'll meet once more before we sever,
To take a long and last farewell,

Then breathe a prayer, and part for ever !”

With smothered voice, he turned aside,
As if he wished a tear to hide,

Another moment—he was gone,
And Inez felt herself alone.

XII.

Like model of the sculptor's art,
With beamless eye and throbbless heart,
She stood as if she life had none,
As still and motionless as stone ;
But, oh ! the wondrous change that came
Like clouds of darkness o'er her frame,
I have no power by words to tell,
She looked so like a fiend of hell ;
A love destroyed, a cold despair,
With hatred and revenge were there.
Then stooping, in her hand she took
Some water from the crystal brook ;
She rose—then wildly gazing round,
And flung it madly on the ground,
While bursting from her lips, there came
A curse upon De Mowbray's name.

THE CURSE.

“ By the water of this well,
Which I cast upon the ground,
Is thy soul, as with a spell,
To my will for ever bound.

“ My curse upon thy name,
Will around thy heart entwine,
It shall blast thy house's fame,
And fall on thee and thine.

“ In thy waking and thy sleep,
I will haunt thee day and night,
Like a spirit from the deep ;
I will never quit thy sight.

“ On every passing gale,
Thou shalt ever hear a voice,
Which will always tell my tale.
And forbid thee to rejoice.

“Thou can'st not escape my hate,
Though thou strivest to be free,
For the chain that binds thy fate,
Is linked with thee and me.

“And wherever thou may'st roam,
By the land or by the sea,
Or within thy castle home,
My curse shall follow thee.”

This said she soon, in haste withdrew,
And in the copse was lost to view.
While floating in the morning air,
Her wild words through the dark woods rung.
'That e'en the frightened birds of air
In startled silence listening hung,
While taking up the awful tale,
Awoke the echoes of the hill,
They told it in the Ribble's vale,
Then died away—and all was still.

CANTO III.

CANTO III.

“ Canst thou picture dried up tears,
Eyes that wept no longer weeping,
Faithful woman’s wrongs and fears,
Lonely, nightly vigils keeping !”

I.

THE curfew-bell hath toll’d the hour
That bids the weary seek their rest,
While roost the birds in grove and bower,
Each pillowed on its feathered breast,
Save that lone songstress of the night,
Whose wild and melancholy tale
Of love—beneath the fading light—
Is echoed through the wood and vale.

No sound disturbs the silent air,
The beauty of repose is there,
Except the soft and gentle tone
As o'er their pebbly bed of stone,
Making sweet music as they glide
The waters of the Ribble's tide.
One by one with shadowy light
The stars peep out as comes the night,
To meet within the clear blue sky
A bright seraphic company.
The flowers are wet with drops of dew,
Each sparkling with a diamond's hue,
And where the night winds gently meet
Fling out their odours wild and sweet.
So calm and still these moments seem,
So like that bright poetic dream,
Which shadows forth the scenes that tell
Of that fair land where spirits dwell,
That you would think that angels now
Had come from Heaven to earth below,

To walk this weary world awhile
O'er man a faithful guard to keep,
To watch him with a golden smile,
And shield him in his hour of sleep.

II.

But soon a great and wond'rous change,
So wild and drear, so dark and strange,
O'er shadows now this lovely scene
As if its beauty ne'er had been !
In masses o'er the face of Heaven
The rolling clouds are upward driven,
And trembling nature stands aghast
Waiting for the coming blast !
The leaves on every tree and bough,
As if with fear, are drooping now ;
There reigns a death-like stillness round,
Save where a low and distant sound,
In murmurs, strikes the startled ear,
That fills the mind with awe and fear !

But see !—that sudden flash of light,
And then another !—the bewildered sight
Turns blind and dizzy with the hue
Of that bright flame of vivid blue ;
And, hark ! the thunder peal's deep swell
Is echoed from each hill and dell,
Rolling amid the lurid sky
In loud tumultuous revelry ;
While rushing waters downward pour
A flood of rain amid the roar.
Like sea of molten metal seems
The swollen river, when the gleams
Of lightning o'er its troubled deep
In broad successive flashes sweep.

It is a wild and fearful night,

A night that well might chosen be

For deeds that may not see the light,

And fiends to walk the earth be free.

III.

Yet where is Mowbray at this hour?

For now the night is waning late,
He comes not to his castle tower,
His home is lone and desolate ;
The Lady Edith in her bower,
With anxious heart and tearful eye,
In silence watches every hour,
As wearily it passes by.

Yet sits she there in her distress,
And smiling in her loveliness.
'Tis strange that one so meek and kind,
Who scarce can bear the passing wind,
Should thus expose her fragile form,
Regardless of the raging storm.
In such a night a watch to keep
When all beside are wrapped in sleep ;
But that her mind was made to show
What woman in her love can do.

The lightning's flash and thunder's peal,
Have not the power to make her feel
A fear ; although, perhaps, the worst
On her devoted head may burst.
Yet what cares she ? for no control
Has terror o'er her pent-up soul ;
For she upon a single throw,
Has staked her being here below ;
Should that be lost—her joys destroyed,
The World would be to her a void.
'Twas Mowbray's love which once possessed,
No other thought could fill her breast ;
Yet dark foreboding thoughts would steal
Across her mind and make her feel
That agonizing death-like chill,
The presage of some coming ill ;
The heart's cold sickness of delay,
When fades the light of Hope away.

IV.

The morning dawns. The coming day
With sunlit smiles now laughs away ;
The floating clouds that hurry by
Upon the wind across the sky ;
And nothing of the storm remains,
 Except that deep and sullen roar,
Which, swollen by the heavy rains,
 The river makes upon the shore.
There is a freshness in the breeze
That gently bends the rustling trees,
While carol forth their early lay,
The birds from every flowery spray.
De Mowbray still returns not home,
 Although the day will soon be spent,
While his retainers forth to roam
 And seek their lord in haste are sent.
They find him not—although is made
Strict search through wood and forest glade,

And every dell and brake around,
Yet of his track no clue is found.
Many a weary night and day
In fruitless search is passed away,
Yet still they found no sign or trace
Of him they sought in endless chase ;
'Till Hope on which they yet relied.
With sickening disappointment died.

v.

But where is she who seemed to be
The ruler of his destiny?
Dark Inez, who appeared to hold
A secret power that uncontrolled,
Could sway De Mowbray to her will,
Be it for good intent or ill.

Gone are they—and like the wind
No trace of them is left behind ;

But what their fate no tongue can tell,
For since they met beside the well
Their forms no mortal eye hath seen,
As if in life they ne'er had been ;

But like a dream of fairy land,
Or some fantastic thing of air
Beneath the necromancer's wand,
Have vanished—and we know not where.

VI.

Week after week had flitted by
Still all was wrapped in mystery ;
When lo ! upon a summer's morn
A fisher at the early dawn,
Who dwelt upon the river's side,
Had cast his net into the tide ;

When near the shore a corpse he found
With matted hair and tattered vest,
Disfigured by a fearful wound
That open gaped upon its breast ;

But yet a jewelled ring it wore,
Which Mowbray's crest and motto bore ;
It brought to mind that fearful night
On which he disappeared from sight ;
When in the pauses of the gale
He heard a strange unearthly wail,
And then amid the lightning's crash
Something like a heavy splash
Upon the deep and troubled wave—
Then all was silent as the grave.

VII.

Now all is past—my tale is told ;
Which like sweet memories of old
Still leave some lingering chords behind
That vibrate music to the mind,
Or float like clouds on summer's day,
Then fade like midnight dreams away.
And all have vanished from the scene,
With nought to show that they had been ;

Their names forgot, of all bereft,
No record of their deeds is left.
E'en that fair hill, the bright green spot
Where stood the tower, is now forgot ;
And not a vestige left is there
To tell the stranger such things were :
Save that clear well, whose crystal stream
Yet sparkles in the sunny beam,
Whose silver tide is flowing still,
'Mid flowers beneath Penwortham's hill.

VIII.

'Tis said that since that fatal night,
On St. John's eve, within that dell,
Beneath the pale moon's trembling light,
Beside our blessed Lady's well
There sits a spirit who can save
A maiden from man's treacherous smiles,
If she will its assistance crave
Against love's deep and specious wiles.

Thus oft, when evening twilight fades,
And close around night's deepening shades,
Village maids will then repair
To see the gentle spirit there ;
And if by doubts and fears distressed
Will ask its aid to give them rest.

THE
DEATH OF EPAMINONDAS.

“Namque ex me natam relinquo pugnam Leutricam, quæ non modo mihi superstes, sed etiam immortalis sit, necesse est.”

WHEN the tumult of the fight had terminated, (the Thebans having gained the victory), Epaminondas, who had been carried to his tent, was found to be mortally wounded. He asked for his shield, which, when brought, he viewed with a languid smile of melancholy joy. Among other things, it was deplored that he left no posterity to inherit the fame of his virtues. “You mistake,” said he, “I leave two fair daughters—the battles of Leuctra and Mantinæa, who will transmit my renown to the latest ages.”

THE
DEATH OF EPAMINONDAS.

THE fight hath ceased—the work of death is o'er
The battle's deafening shout now sounds no more
The setting sunbeams brightly, calmly shed
A glory round the dying and the dead.
Wide o'er the plain sad stillness reigns alone,
Save when at intervals the wounded groan ;
Broken shields and spears are strewed around,
With mangled limbs spread o'er the gory ground ;
In rude disorder gasping victims lay
With eyes upturned, while life ebbs fast away,

Wistfully watching the sun's last light
Before they sleep in everlasting night.

Now to his tent with tender care they bring
The God-like Theban ere his soul take wing ;
And gently place him on a couch to rest
His weary limbs, and soothe his troubled breast ;
A plaintive joy his visage seems to light
Like the sun's farewell when sinking into night.
With folded arms his comrades stand around,
Their melting eyes fixed sternly on the ground,
While down their manly cheeks with deep felt grief,
The tears are trickling for their dying chief.
“ Bring me my shield !” the illustrious hero cries.
While exultation flashes in his eyes.
The shield of ponderous size and burnished bright,
Is brought, and placed before his dizzy sight ;
He slowly moves his dimmed and glazing eye,
O'er its broad disc with closest scrutiny ;

Then lifts his languid head and smiling cheers
His weeping friends and chides away their tears :
“ No sons I leave to perpetuate my fame,
“ Or raise the splendour of the Theban name ;
“ But two fair daughters over time shall reign,
“ Leuctra’s bloody field and Mantinæa’s plain.”

His speech hath ceased—his eye is glazing o’er,
He fast is journeying to return no more ;
His life is sinking like exhausted fire,
When its flickering flame seems ready to expire
He’s gone ! his mighty soul hath fled,
To dwell within the mansions of the dead !



Lone Musings.



“ Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus omnes,
Flumina amem silvasque inglorius.”

VIRGIL.



No. I.

Spring Flowers.



‘ call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flow’rets of a thousand hues.”

MILTON.

I LOVE the early flowers of Spring,
When first they smile in beauty gay ;
I love the lark when, on the wing,
He sweetly tunes his airy lay.
I love the rainbow spread on high
The glowworm’s pale and trembling light—
I love the evening breeze’s sigh,
And nightingale’s sweet song by night.

The flowers of Spring will soon decay,
Nor longer smile in beauty fair,
The lark will cease to tune his lay,
Nor float through liquid fields of air :
The rainbow tints will melt away,
The glowworm cease her lamp to light,
The evening breeze will die away,
And nightingale sing no more by night.

But there are thoughts which round us cast
The mighty magic of their sway,
Sweet dreamy visions of the past,
Dreams that pass not soon away.
On these dear things I love to dwell,
And muse in silence when alone,
As sweetly to my heart they tell
Of early joys long past and gone.

'Tis then that memory's golden chain
Connects us with our former years,

Bringing to our hearts again

 Youthful friends, loves, hopes, and fears.

Although of these by death bereft,

 And broken are those sacred ties,

The thoughts of loved ones still are left.

 Their dear remembrance never dies.

No. II.

The River.



“ The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,
To the confiding bark untrue,
And if she trust the stars above
They can be treacherous too.”

WORDSWORTH

I LATELY watched on Ribble's side
And saw its silver waters glide
In varied gambols ;—while the spray
From stone to stone leaped on its way :
Yet steadily it floated by
Like life towards eternity.

Still in its course there may be seen
A solitary spot serene—
So silent,—yet so deep and clear,
That Heaven appears reflected there.
So placid is that peaceful spot
The gentle breeze disturbs it not ;
And as the sunbeams brightly rest
In golden smiles upon its breast,
So soothing and so mild it seems,
Like infant sleep or childhood's dreams,
That ye would think beneath its wave
All there was tranquil as the grave ;
But trust it not!—it is the guile
That treachery carries in its smile.

'Tis often said, when smooth appear
The waters, there is much to fear,
And where they seem to calmly sleep,
There is beneath a treacherous deep,
Which calls to mind, alas ! too late,
Perhaps some hapless victim's fate.

And so it is amid the strife
And daily toils of human life,
That what we take for friendship's smile
Is but hypocrisy the while.
'Tis thus the full confiding heart
Too often feels the bitter smart
Arising from a promise broken,
Or words we once thought kindly spoken.
Then trust not him who, soft and bland,
Would seek to take thee by the hand,
His words (which like the idle wind)
Speak not the feelings of the mind.
Trust not his bright and beaming eye,
'Tis there the serpent's charm doth lie.
Remember then the river's tide,
And where its waters smoothly glide:
Believe beneath its shining wave
There is a deep and certain grave.

No. III.

The Sunset.



“ When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old thoughts new wail my dear time’s waste.”

SHAKESPEARE’S SONNETS.

’Tis sweet at eve to watch the lingering ray
That sunset sheds upon departing day ;
To mark its varied tints, its changing hue,
The gold-edged clouds—the sky, so clear and
blue ;

To note the gorgeous colours of the scene,
Sublimely brilliant, glorious, and serene ;
To see the sun set in the west at last,
His work complete, his daily journey past.

'Tis sweet to watch the gloaming's fading light
Steal softly o'er, as day melts into night ;
While indistinct each glimmering object seems
Like mystic shadows in our midnight dreams,
When not a sound disturbs the soft repose,
Save where some distant streamlet gently flows,
Making sweet music as it ripples by,
And murmuring in the ear a lullaby.

'Tis in that hour that thoughts will backward
steal
To days long past—thus causing us to feel
How time hath passed—how day by day
We idly threw so many hours away,

In raising wild and visionary schemes,
Led by the light of Hope's delusive dreams.
How madly entered we life's giddy race
Eager to join with others in the chase !
On, on we rushed nor cared to look behind
As thoughts of future greatness filled the mind :
Proudly the soul would wing her upward flight,
For coming prospects seemed for ever bright.
And we have lived to see how time destroys
The fairest visions—youth's best brightest joys ;
Have seen our fairy fabrics melt away,
Like morning mists before the sun's bright ray.

And still sad thoughts will o'er our memory creep
Of friends once loved now laid in death's cold sleep ;
Perhaps reproach will whisper in our breast,
Recalling faults or wrongs still unredressed ;
Of hearts dissevered by an idle word
In anger spoken, breaking friendship's chord.
How gladly then would we recall the past,
That we might speak the word "*forgive* " at last !

'Tis in such hours as these the heart will dwell
On lonely thoughts, too deep for words to tell ;
Holding communion with a world more bright,
Where holy spirits dwell in realms of light ;
Raising the mind from earth to Heaven above,
Uniting all in one sweet bond of love.

No. IV.

Night.



“ There’s not the smallest orb which thou beholdest,
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim.”

SHAKESPEARE.

’TWAS on a summer’s eve, at daylight’s close,
When all around was sunk in deep repose ;
Behind the western hills the sun had set,
And stars in Heaven above had brightly met ;
The sounds of toil, the busy hum of life,
Had ceased their daily round of anxious strife.

It was a peaceful hour, the air serene,
When forth I went to muse upon the scene
From Ainham's brow.* The night was bright and
clear,
No sound arose upon the listening ear ;
A balmy freshness floated in the wind,
And gently stole in sweetness o'er the mind,
Awaking thoughts within its deep recess,
That dwelt on Nature in her loveliness.
The pale cold moon held her unclouded sway,
And through the starlit sky pursued her way ;
Her beams o'er all in silence calmly slept ;
The gale in hollow cadence sweetly swept,
Making soft music through the glittering trees,
That gently waved beneath the evening breeze.

* The name of an eminence which skirts the southern extremity of Preston, and slopes somewhat precipitously to the banks of the Ribble. Few towns in England can boast so magnificent a prospect as that from the heights of Ainham, or, more properly, Avenham.

Some way below, the Ribble's winding stream
In murmurs floated in the trembling beam,
Meandering with a low and stilly moan,
As leaped its sparkling tide from stone to stone.

Like golden dreams that steal the heart away,
And waft the thoughts to realms of brighter day,
There seemed a soul-composing stillness there
That raised the mind to worlds more bright and
fair;

And then methought I heard amid the blaze,
Each rolling planet sing its Maker's praise;
On every hand there seemed to be a voice
Whose accents bade created things rejoice.
The hills, the vales, poured forth a glorious strain,
From earth to Heaven, from Heaven to earth again.
O stars of Heaven! ye are a glorious sight,
That makes the soul grow dizzy with delight;
Recoiling on itself—in wonder lost
By gazing on thy bright cherubic host!

"Tis not within the reach of hands profane
To raise on earth to God a fitting fane,
For He his lasting dwelling place hath made
Amid his works, on truth's foundations laid ;
Amid yon countless orbs hath placed his throne,
A glorious temple fit for Him alone !

Go, mark the great Creator's vast domain,
Where all are bound in one harmonious chain ;
Where dwellers of the earth, the sea, and sky
Denote a power for all eternity.
See this, then ask the sceptic in his pride,
Why he can doubt ? why scoff ? why dare deride
The handiworks of God, whose power sublime
Shall last beyond the farthest bounds of time ?
Say why for *him* the fairest flowers bloom,
And waste their sweets o'er an eternal tomb ?
Say why for man the brightest roses blow ?
And yet for *him* the night-shade blossoms
grow !

Then grant me, Heaven, the heart to know and feel
Thy works ; then care I not for woe or weal,
So I but hear the voice of Nature raise
Her universal hymn to Thee of praise !

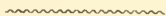


Miscellaneous Poems.



MAN.

“ Der Mensch glantz eine zeitlang über die Erde dann
verschwindet er und wird im grabe verborgen.”



In beauty's pride see yonder flower,

How bright it blooms to-day ;

Yet ere to-morrow's dawning hour

'Twill fade, 'twill fade away.

Perhaps within its dewy breast

The canker worm hath been,

And though it outwardly seems blest.

Death lurks within unseen.

Go, see its leaves fall one by one,

Mark how it droops its head,

And ere its life hath scarce begun

'Tis numbered with the dead.

Now, in its melancholy fate,
A lesson you may see—
A moral type of life's estate,
Sad emblem of mortality !
Just like the flower, see man to-day,
In beauty, strength, and pride,
Gay, joyous dreams around him play.
And Hope smiles by his side.
To-morrow comes, and o'er his head
A withering blight hath swept :
Both man and flower are with the dead,
Unthought of, and unwept !

SABBATH BELLS.



I LOVE ye well, ye Sabbath bells,
When chiming soft and melancholy ;
For then your music sweetly tells
Of things that are both pure and holy.

How back your tones to memory bring
The thoughts of past and early years ;
Ye tell how time on speedy wing
Hath brought me through this vale of tears.

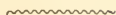
How oft have I, in boyhood's prime,
Before I knew one anxious care,
Listened to your sacred chime,
Calling all to peace and prayer.

Ye are a well-remembered voice,
Which of some deep devotion tells ;
Bidding the sinner's heart rejoice,
Ye pure and holy Sabbath bells !

And still thy chimes shall sweetly sweep
Upon the wind, that o'er my head
Will blow, when laid in silent sleep
I rest among the mouldering dead.

And should thy tones some stranger hear,
When near my grave he passes by,
I ask him but to shed a tear,
And for my follies breathe a sigh.

THE DREAM OF LIFE.*



See yon bright insect of an hour,
How it flits from flower to flower,
Led by the illusive power
Of Pleasure's dream.

* I cannot resist the pleasure of introducing here a translation of the above ode by my friend, C. C. Wambey, Esq., of Magdalene Hall, Oxford. I regret the original is not more worthy of his elegant verses.

Illud insectum nitidum ecce vivens
Tam brevem vitam volitare in agris,
Perfidis ductum insidiis repente
Deliciarum.

But with the setting sun's last ray,
Soon, soon, alas ! will pass away
The life God gave it for a day,
And all is o'er.

Thus poor weak man his time employs,
In dwelling on the gilded toys
Of earthly hopes and earthly joys,
In useless gaze.

Sed cadentis cum radio diei
Protinus vita heu fugiet caduca,
In diem illi quam tribuere divi
Deinde peribit.

Sic homo mortalis inane tempus
Conterit, nugis nitidis morando
Divitum sperum, et quoque gaudiorum
Vanaque captat.

With throbbing heart and heaving sigh
He still strives on with eager eye
To catch each pleasure floating by
 With ceaseless toil.

But soon his race of life is o'er,
His wishes gained, they please no more,
Too late he finds, when all is o'er,
 'Twas but a dream.

Anxio corde et gemitu fremente,
Instat ardenti valide ore, frustra,
Gaudium quodque ad capiendum inane,
 Atque operatur.

Cursus ut vitæ rapide peractus,
Non placent vota amplius impetrata
Seriùs tandem hæc reperit dolosa,
 Cuncta fuisse.

Oh, may this tale a lesson be
To teach the truth and make us see,
That not from follies e'en are free
The wise and good.

For often will the brightest ray
That genius scatters in our way
Glitter only to betray
And lead us wrong.

• Verba sint nobis monito hæc severo,
Atque sic omnes homines docerent,
Non malis terrâ vitiis carere,
Vel sapientes.

Sæpius vero radius coruscans
Quem in viam nostram Genius remisit,
In gravem tantum micuit ruinam
Ducere doctos.

Then teach me, God, thy ways to keep,
And love Thee with affection deep,
That I in peace may calmly sleep

In death at last.

And learn that as I onward speed,
Of worldly pomps to take no heed,
For earthly joys and pleasures lead

But to the grave.

Me Deus, servare igitur doceto,

Mente forti jussa, et amare multum

Te, patrem nostrum, ut placide reponar

Morte supremo.

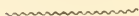
Atque dum cursum perago citatum,

Me doce pompas minime tueri,

Nam voluptates misere scelestas,

Ducere ad orcum.

IT IS NOT WHEN THE EYES BEAM
BRIGHTEST.

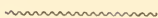


It is not when the eyes beam brightest,
Or lips in gladness seem to smile,
That we can say the heart is lightest
Or that the mind is calm the while !
For oft the sunbeams mildly rest
In radiance on some lonely tomb,
But yet the light that gilds its breast,
Cannot dispel its inward gloom.

So thus, though smiles of cheerfulness
May hide the woe that fills the heart,
They cannot make its misery less,
Nor one bright gleam of joy impart ;

For though the eye be calm and dry,
Nor yet one sign of grief appear,
The brain may burn without a sigh,
The heart may burst—without a tear !

THE FIELD FLOWER.



Go, see the little wild field flower,
And mark it's varied hue,
It speaks of a mysterious Power
Placed far above our view ;
Although the wind with tempest rife
May bend its fragile form,
The Power Divine who gave it life,
Protects it from the storm.

Then do not think in our distress
That we are quite alone,
Or that the care of us is less
Than to the flower shown ;

Be sure that He who can bestow
A thought on that poor flower,
Will His kind mercy to us show
In tribulation's hour.

The passions of the troubled soul
Are quiet then—nor need control
 Their war to cease ;
We reach at last our destined goal,
 And rest in peace.

No envious thoughts disturb us there,
Joy's brightest smile and misery's tear
 Alike are still ;
No longer vexed by hope or fear,
 We feel no ill.

The flowers of spring will brightly bloom,
And sweetly o'er the silent tomb
 Their freshness fling,
A presage to our earthly doom
 Of hope they bring.

And there is still, although no tear
Be shed by sorrow o'er our bier,
One solace left—
We of God's great and watchful care
Are not bereft.

For we shall see that better land,
Where with golden harps they stand,
The angels bright,
While rise hosannahs from that band
Midst Heaven's light!

The soul will break its earthly chain
To seek its long lost home again
For ever blest,
And find beneath its Maker's reign
Eternal rest!

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

INSCRIBED TO EMILY.

“ Jamais ecoulent les larmes après le sourire du plaisir.”

ANTHOLOGIE ANONYME.

How often we find that a joy-lighted smile
Is closely allied to dark misery's tear ;
Though the sunlight of gladness may beam for
awhile,
The dark clouds of sorrow are hovering near.

'Tis said that soon after young creation's birth,
Two nymphs were sent down to watch over
mankind ;

And when one was seen laughing to roam o'er the
earth,

The other was sure to be closely behind.

Yes, Pleasure may spread her gay pinions awhile,
To catch the poor triflers that crowd in her
train ;

But little they dream as they bask in her smile
How soon their delight will be followed by
pain.

And, oh ! should the world's hollow smiles glad
thy heart,

Believe not, believe not that all are sincere ;
Remember that soon as our pleasures depart,
Pain weeping in sadness is sure to be near.

TO EMILY

ON HER BIRTHDAY.



OF earthly joys there is a joy
We feel above the rest ;
It is to know that we are loved
By those whom we love best ;
It sheds a charm on life's career,
And guides us on our way,
While memory lends her softened light,
With Hope's still brighter ray.

Then, best and dearest, do not say
That I shall e'er forget,
Though rudely snatched by Death away,
I still will love thee yet ;
Though laid beneath the dull cold earth
Thy once loved form may be,
Yet I will watch thy hallowed grave,
And fondly think of thee.

And oft when sadness fills my heart
I'll seek each favourite scene,
The river's side and forest glade,
Where we have happy been ;
And while I view each well-known spot
Of dingle, copse, and tree,
I then shall fancy by my side
Thy gentle form I see.

I'll pluck the sweetest flowers that grow
To strew upon thy bed,

The flowers thou lovedst in life the best
Shall bloom above thy head ;
With them I'll deck thy lowly grave
And watch with tenderest care,
And think that, as I pray for thee,
Thy spirit lingers there.

TO MARIAN—SLEEPING.

LIKE early violets when they sweetly blow,
And shed their perfume mid the winter snow,
Thy lot is cast ;
Though angels o'er thy head their vigils keep,
Still are the visions of thy infant sleep
Too bright to last.

For thou art come into a world—whose smile
Though fair it seem—deceives us yet the while,
Like meteor light ;
Whose flickering flame illumines our lonely way,
And guides us onward only to betray
With fancies bright.

Sweet babe, no thoughts within thy spotless mind
Disturb thy peace—the winter's biting wind,

Thou heedest not ;

For in thy slumbers sweet, and tranquil rest,
Bright dreams of Heaven dwell within thy breast,
Though hard thy lot.

And when within thy sparkling eye of blue,
Like some fair flower when bathed with glistening
dew,

There hangs a tear ;

In beauty breaking, like the golden ray
Of sunshine through the showers on April's day,
Thy smiles appear.

Sleep on, my child—may seraphs guard thy bed,
And shed their glory round thy infant head,
Till dawns the day ;

That when thou wakest thou mayest safely run
The race of life that thou hast just begun,
And speed thy way.

Oh ! may the eye that watched thee at thy birth,
For ever guide thy footsteps o'er this earth

Still free from pain ;

And when thy life's dark pilgrimage is past

Thy gentle spirit may He take at last

To Heaven again !

TO THE SAME.

LIKE the fading of a dream,
Thou hast vanished from my sight,
And hast left me but a gleam
Of a vision pure and bright.

As I watched thy growth awhile,
I had hoped I might rejoice
To have seen thy opening smile,
And have heard thy artless voice.

But to me it was denied,
To have seen thee day by day,
For thy mother's heartless pride,
Hath sent thee far away.

Though thy form I may not see,
Thou to me art like a spell,
While my heart will still on thee
With affection ever dwell.

Though thou must not—they will tell thee,
Ever breathe my hated name,
Or bestow one thought upon me,
I will bless thee still the same.

When a few short years have passed
In silence o'er thy head,
And around thee time has cast
The light of days then fled,

Perhaps fond memory may impart
Some kindly thoughts to thee,
And awake within thy heart
Some affection still for me.

Then if this should meet thine eye,

Wilt thou ever for me feel ?

Or in sorrow breathe a sigh

If soft pity o'er thee steal ?

Or if in Death's cold sleep,

I am laid beneath the earth,

For my memory wilt thou weep ?

Who have loved thee from thy birth.

Farewell ! I still will pray

'That Heaven smile on thee yet,

Though thou art far away,

'Thee ne'er shall I forget.

A FRAGMENT.



DEEP in the earth, and far below
The reach that man's weak hand can go,
Many a hidden gem doth lie
Buried in obscurity ;
It's form unseen, unblest by light,
It's beauty veiled from mortal sight ;
So thus within the human breast
The mind may sleep, the genius rest,
And like the subterranean fire
Still moulder on, and then expire,
Nor ever break the bonds away
That keep it from external day.

THE CAPTIVE.

“ La speranza è sempre verde ;
Negli affanni mai si stanca
Ogni cosa al mondo manca
La speranza mai si perde.”

SERAFINO AQUILANO.

THOUGH not a sound may pierce my ear again,
Save misery's moan and slavery's iron chain,
Though e'en, perhaps, this hour my doom is near,
'Tis not through fear I shed the bitter tear ;
But 'tis that grief which only they can tell,
Who, like me, have fondly loved too well ;
Thus when the night winds round my prison
sweep,
Responsive to their cadence do I sigh and weep.

"Twas yesternight when madness seized my brain,
A short respite from sense of mortal pain,
Methought, with solace sweet, my false love came
To sooth my grief and raise my drooping frame ;
But reason once again resumed her sway,
And flashed upon me with the glare of day,
And with the light of the returning beam
The phantom vanished like a midnight dream.
Then I awoke, with double force to feel
The rankling wound of jealousy's poisoned steel,
And then despair within me wildly grew
To fiend-like passions of the darkest hue.
What then I felt I have not power to name,
So black within my breast my thoughts became ;
But, happily, remorse came to my aid,
And in my breast, low whispering, thus she said :
" Hast thou forgot that Fortitude was given
To guard thy weakness? (a sacred gift from
Heaven ;)

And canst thou, lost to every sense of shame,
Stain with suicide thy sex's name?
Hast thou forgot, when chased by vice and woe,
The virtues winged their flight to realms above,
That Hope remained to soothe mankind below,
And win by smiles the world to peace and love?
Then live to hope a brighter sun may shine
To gild thy days and soften thy decline,
And think when fortune frowns—one joy is left
behind,
'Tis ever-smiling Hope, the rainbow of the mind."

TO THE ROBIN.

OF all birds in the sky
I love the Robin best,
With little bright black eye,
And red and shining breast.

I love to hear his note
So sweetly soft and mild,
When from his little throat
He pours his music wild.

How canst thou venture forth

To brave the wintry storm?

How to the biting north

Expose thy slender form?

How fearless dost thou roam,

'Gainst hunger to prepare,

Thy thoughts are still on home,

Thy young thy constant care.

Fear thou canst never know,

For God in Heaven above

Looks down on thee below,

And shields thee with his love.

And when thou'rt far away,

Or home within thy nest,

He guards thee both by day,

And in thy hour of rest.

Well hath the Saviour said,*
“ My Father cares for all,”
Nought lives without his aid,
Nor doth one sparrow fall.

The lilies of the plain †
Receive his bounteous care,
And in one joyous strain
All nature breathes a prayer.

Then come, oh, little stranger,
Right welcome shalt thou be ;
There is no fear of danger,
No harm shall come to thee !

* “ And are not two sparrows sold for one farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.”—St. Matt. x. 29.

† “ Consider the lilies of the field how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin.”—St. Luke xii. 27.

And gladly will I share
My morning meal with thee ;
I have enough to spare
For little friends like thee.

Poor little wandering thing,
I'll give thee shelter here ;
Thou dost much comfort bring
My wintry hours to cheer.

And when the storm is past,
And summer gains her sway,
I'll think thy lot is cast
In regions far away.

OH, TREAD NOT ON THAT SIMPLE
FLOWER.

OH, tread not on that simple flower,
It was not made in vain ;
Remember thou hast not the power
To give it life again.
By God's command its opening bloom
Was made to gem the vale,
And sweetly cast its rich perfume
Upon the floating gale.

Oh, let thy step in mercy spare
It's weak and slender frame ;

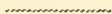
Forget not the Creator's care
For all things is the same ;
But leave in peace its gentle form,
Nor tear its leaves away,
For if by thee 'tis crushed and torn,
Soon, soon it will decay.

Like maiden to the world unknown,
Her beauty heeded not ;
Who like a flow'ret lived alone,
In some secluded spot.
But in an unpropitious hour
The ruthless spoiler came,
And rudely snatched from peaceful bower
Her weak and trembling frame.

Then act not thou the spoiler's part
Towards that little flower ;
Believe that it can feel a smart
When bent beneath thy power,

And, like the poor deserted maid,
Her charms remembered not ;
For soon the flower when plucked will fade,
Its beauty be forgot.

TO — ON HER BIRTHDAY.



THOUGH many years have passed away,

My love of thee is still the same ;

And ever will thy natal day

Bring back to me new joy again,

My dearest * * * *

Though some are changed toward me now,

Still thou art just the same to me

As when my first, my earliest vow

Of love and truth was pledged to thee,

My dearest * * * *

Oh, may thy life as gently flow,
As streamlets when they glide away ;
On summer's eve beneath the glow
That sunset sheds on parting day,
My dearest * * * *

And when pale Fate shall summon thee
To give to heaven thy latest breath,
My hope, my wish, my prayer, will be,
That I may sleep with thee in death,
My dearest * * * *

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